industry, particularly small industry, do not face unfair competition after the dismantling of import quotas?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) Government is absolutely determined to ensure through appropriate use of the tariff and other mechanisms that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury to the domestic industry or to agriculture due to import quota removals by April 2001. Towards that end, Government has increased duties on a number of items where a surge in imports was noticed or apprehended, for example, the duties on arecanut has been raised to 100%, on poultry products to 100%, on wheat to 50%, on skimmed milk powder to 60%, on apple to 50%, on edible oils to 35% and on rice to 80%. India's tariff bindings at WTO for most of the agricultural items are fairly high and effective rates of customs duties can be raised to those levels, in case there is any evidence of substantial increase in imports.

Government has also decided to constitute an Inter-Ministerial Group to study the impact of removal of quantitative restrictions.

Besides, a Group of Ministers has been entrusted with the task of suggesting ways and means for empowering the SSI sector. Their recommendations are awaited.

Ill-effects of TV serials

†*16. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
DR. D. MASTHAN:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news-item captioned "T.V. Serial was his undoing" published in The Hindustan Times, dated 1st July, 2000;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that serials being telecast by electronic media are contributing to the increase in crimes in the society; and

(c) if not, what is the reaction of Government and what steps have been taken by Government to save the society from such ill-effects in future?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) While all the serials being telecast by electronic media may not contribute to increase in crimes, those eulogising violence do not create desirable impact on the viewers. Therefore, Programme and Advertisement Codes of Doordarshan as well as those applicable under the Cable Act, do not permit programmes, which incite violence.

Backward and tribal areas in Himachal Pradesh

*17. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the stations earmarked as backward and tribal areas in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether Government of Himachal Pradesh has demanded the uplift of the standard of life of the people living in far-flung areas of Himachal Pradesh; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and what action Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) The Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti districts, in their entirety, and Pangi and Bharmour (now tehsil Bharmour and sub-tehsil Holi) Sub-Divisions of Chamba District constitute the tribal areas in the State, fulfilling the minimum criterion of 50% Scheduled Tribe population concentration in a Community Development (CD) Block. These are situated in the north and north-east of the Pradesh forming a contiguous belt in the far hinterland behind high mountains. These areas have been declared as Scheduled Areas according to the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. The above areas are infrastructurally backward. In the absence of railways and water transport, roads are the only means of communication in the predominantly hilly State of Himachal Pradesh.

(b) and (c) No specific proposal has been received from the State Government.